

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A set top terminal for generating an interactive electronic program guide for display on a television connected thereto, the terminal comprising:

5 means for retrieving information about a subscriber;
means for receiving a television signal;
means for extracting individual programs from the television signal;
means for generating an electronic program guide for controlling display of content on a television screen, the guide comprising:
10 a home menu;
a plurality of major menus displayed as menu options on the home menu;
a plurality of sub-menus displayed as menu options on the plurality of major menus; and
15 a plurality of during programming menus enacted after selection of a program; and
means for receiving the selection signals from a user input.

2. The terminal of claim 1, wherein the guide further comprises an introductory menu that is displayed upon beginning use of the guide.

3. The terminal of claim 2, wherein the introductory menu automatically appears on the television screen when the set top terminal is turned on.

4. The terminal of claim 2, wherein introductory menu displays information or messages from a television delivery system operations center that provides programming.

5. The terminal of claim 4, wherein the information or messages are directed to a particular subscriber.

6. The terminal of claim 4, wherein the information or messages are directed to a group of subscribers.

7. The terminal of claim 1, wherein the during program menus comprise hidden menus and program overlay menus.

8. A set top terminal for generating an interactive electronic program guide for display on a television connected to the set top terminal, the terminal comprising:

means for receiving a television signal;
means for extracting individual programs from the television signal;
means for generating an electronic program guide for controlling display of
content on a television screen, the guide comprising:

5 a logo that is displayed on the television screen during one of the
programs, which program has one or more interactive features; and

a overlay menu that is displayed during the one of the programs, the
overlay menu including the interactive features; and

means for receiving the selection signals from the user input.

10 wherein the logo indicates to a user that the interactive features are available for the
program, and wherein the overlay menu is displayed in response to a signal received from
the user input.

9. The terminal of claim 8, wherein the overlay menu includes menu options
for a plurality of interactive features.

15 10. The terminal of claim 9, wherein the overlay menu further includes a
menu option to return to the program without the interactive features.

11. The terminal of claim 9, wherein the guide further comprises a cursor that
indicates one of the menu options, wherein the cursor is controlled by the user input.

20 12. The terminal of claim 9, wherein the interactive features include quizzes,
facts, or products, related to the program.

13. The terminal of claim 9, wherein the guide further comprises a plurality of
interactive submenus for use with the interactive features, which submenus are displayed
in response to a selection of the menu items, the selection being received as at least one
of the selection signals from the user input.

25 14. The terminal of claim 13, wherein the submenus are displayed in a video
window in a scaled-down program video format.

15. The terminal of claim 13, wherein the program and one or more of the
submenus are displayed on the television at the same time.

16. The terminal of claim 8, wherein the logo is displayed as an overlay menu.

30 17. The terminal of claim 8, wherein the logo is displayed by the set top
terminal, and wherein the set top terminal determines whether there is data or information

about the program to be displayed as the one or more interactive features and displays the logo if there is data or information.

18. The terminal of claim 17, wherein the set top terminal generates an overlay menu including the logo.

5 19. The terminal of claim 8, wherein the overlay menu is generated by the set top terminal using data received during a vertical blanking interval.

20. The terminal of claim 8, wherein the logo is displayed in a corner of a screen of the television periodically for a specified duration.

10 21. The terminal of claim 20, wherein the logo is displayed for fifteen seconds during a plurality of ten-minute segments of the program.

22. A set top terminal for generating an interactive electronic program guide for display on a television connected to the set top terminal, the terminal comprising:

means for retrieving information about a subscriber;

means for receiving a television signal;

15 means for extracting individual programs from the television signal;

means for generating an electronic program guide for controlling display of content on a television screen, the guide comprising:

a plurality of interactive menus, each corresponding to a level of interactivity and having one or more interactive menu items for selection; and

20 a main menu having one or more main menu items for selection, which main menu items correspond to the interactive menus, wherein the menus are navigated using a user input, and wherein the main menu items and the interactive menu items are responsive to selection signals received from the user input; and

means for receiving the selection signals from the user input.

25 23. A method of generating an interactive electronic programming guide for display on a television connected to the set top terminal, the method comprising:

receiving a television signal from an operations center, the signal having a plurality of television programs and interactive features;

extracting the individual programs from the signal;

30 generating a plurality of interactive menus each corresponding to a level of interactivity;

generating a plurality of program menus having information related to the programs;

generating a main menu having one or more menu items for selection, the menu items including an interactive menu item for accessing the interactive menus and a program menu item for accessing the program menus;

displaying the main menu on a television screen;

receiving from a user input device a selection of one of the menu items; and

displaying interactive or program menus associated with the selection.

24. The method of claim 23, further comprising:

displaying one of the programs on the screen; and

displaying during the program a logo indicating that interactive features are associated with the program.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

receiving from the user input device a signal associated with the logo; and

displaying, in response to the signal, an overlay menu of the interactive features.